

FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

I am Adèle Gilbert, I am 22 years old and I am a volunteer from the west part of France. My volunteering is with the association Giacche Verdi di Bronte; I stayed in Sicily during 6 months, from September 2017 to February 2018, to help this association with other 14 volunteers to accomplish a project about environmental education.

MY APPLICATION

For me application is a bit peculiar. In fact, it was the end of August and I was looking for an EVS when a friend send me the project of an association in Sicily which was in collaboration with the German's government. The project started in a week, the 1st September, so not a long to think but in the contrary I applied directly, because I needed to do something for the next year, and also a big need to do a break in my studies to know what I really want to do in my life. On top on that the project was located in Italy, a country that I adore because of my origins; also the purpose of the project was oriented to the environmental education which was really interesting for me because I have the wish to become teacher. So I applied in the middle of the night after watching the last episode of "Games of Thrones"; and one week after it was my first step in Sicily and I don't regret it at all.

THE PROJECT

So to be short the project involved to teach to children the importance of the forest for the humanity, and for the climate. So the first weeks we created a PowerPoint presentation which developed the different parts of the tree and the functions of each of them; after to describe concisely the second part of the presentation was about what the forest can provide for the fauna. And finally the main part was about the impact of the forest on the climate and why it is important also for us, for example the prevention of erosion, landslide, etc. This presentation was the main

part of the first outing in schools; beside of the PowerPoint, there was also a game which consisted in making a tree with the pupils (arms for branches, body for the trunk, etc.)

When we did every presentation, the time for the second outing arrived: the harvest of seeds. For this outing we went in park with the children to crop the acorn and also to make sensitive them in the nature; to do that Julia, Kate and I, we researched games to do with the pupils and one game became the favorite of the children: the pipistrello e le zanzare (the bat and the mosquitoes). This game was supposed to teach to the pupils how the bat is hunting and also the importance of the silence in the woods because to be short, one kid had the eyes closed with a blindfold and he had to find by using his hearing five others kids who were the mosquitoes and doing the mosquito's noise. But as you can imagine barely we began they screamed because it was really exciting to play for them; that was really great for us because it means that we chose wisely but in the other side our willing to teach them what I wrote above didn't succeed. For this second outing, the part of the volunteers who were in Mascali, on the seaside, including myself, we were lucky with the weather because we went outside almost every time. And it was almost the same case for the third outing.

The last part of the project has been to plant the acorns with the children and we also sensitive them to the biological oranges and we did them recognize the typical trees of Sicily. The project Boschi per la Biosfera in Mascali ended the 25th January with the inauguration of the Bio Parco Blue Garden, an abandoned area which we cleaned in an effort to create a park where is it possible to relax, discover Sicily's biodiversity and eve for the neighbours to do a vegetable garden. During this morning of inauguration the children could helped to build a house for insect, they could also tasted biological oranges, planted trees, antic seeds and the acorn, discovered different plant and how to observe animals in their natural habitat and finally expressed their artistic soul. This inauguration worked so well that we also did it in Adrano, Linguaglossa and Piedimonte.

CONCLUSION

When I arrived in Sicily, I knew stuffs about nature, but not like the others volunteers who did some studies around it; so obviously I learned a lot from them. I didn't just acquire knowledge about nature from them but also about life because we are all different, from different countries, with different cultures but we succeeded pretty well to live together and we created an incredible friendship. I think those 6 months change me, made me grown up, and now thanks to my friends from all of Europe I know better myself. Ok, maybe I have to stop to shower them with compliments and also say that the experience at schools made me more sure about my future

work. I thought at the beginning of the volunteering that I will teach a lot to the kids but actually I learned more from them. To conclude, I can say that this volunteering changes me, in a good way, and I'm happy of that.

Thank you Giacche Verdi and Mansfred Hermsen Stiftung !